



AP Photo

Snowy salad

Covered with snow, bison forage on a hillside along Interstate 70 west of Denver near the small mountain community of Evergreen, Colo., Monday as a winter storm swept over Colorado's Front Range.

But Wilkerson insists Corona's work is a valuable databank of time series photos that can help environmentalists study trends in rain forest destruction, creeping deserts and soil depletion.

She also said the Federal Emergency Management Agency has asked the NRO to give it satellite photos of areas beset by natural disasters so that FEMA can provide relief as swiftly as possible. And analysts who refined Corona's cameras were approached by radiologists at Harvard University seeking to improve the equipment used to detect cancerous breast tissue, Wilkerson said.

But Jeffrey Richelson, senior fellow at the National Security Archives, said the NRO is not newly dedicating itself to ecological, meteorological and scientific research. And he said those who view the documentary should not assume that the NRO's reconnaissance activity died when the Cold War ended.

"You still need to understand what other countries are doing militarily. Deployment of M-11 mis-

siles in Pakistan, the North Korean nuclear program, military movements in the Middle East — some of that information requires high-resolution photography," he said. "These are useful even in the absence of the U.S. being involved in a war."

The NRO's budget is estimated to be somewhere between \$15 billion and \$20 billion, a healthy chunk of the entire intelligence budget which, while secret, is said to be between \$28 billion and \$30 billion. Earlier this month the House

SDAY.